



*United States Senate*  
**Committee on Small Business  
and Entrepreneurship**

*Olympia J. Snowe, Chair*

For Immediate Release:  
March 9, 2006

Contact: Chris Chichester  
202-228-5843

**SNOWE: COMMITTEE APPROVES ERIC THORSON UNANIMOUSLY  
AS NEXT SBA INSPECTOR GENERAL**

***Calls for "Aggressive and Tireless Leadership" On Behalf of America's 25  
Million Small Businesses***

*(Washington, DC) – U.S. Senator Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine), Chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, today issued the following statement after the Committee reported out the nomination of Eric Thorson as the Small Business Administration's Inspector General by a vote of 16-0:*

"Eric Thorson has worked in both the executive and legislative branches under Republicans and Democrats alike, including Rep. John Conyers, the late Senator Bill Roth, and then-Minority Leader Trent Lott. His past investigative subjects include the Enron and WorldCom corporate scandals, the cost of defense weapons programs, IRS abuses, Medicare fraud, and Russian organized crime. These investigations were not restricted to particular instances of fraud or misconduct, but also covered broad administration of government programs. In particular, his investigations of the IRS abuses resulted in a comprehensive Congressional overhaul of the IRS.

"Today, the SBA Inspector General confronts enormous challenges, such as the unacceptable response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, enforcement of government-wide small business contracting rules, and oversight of SBA lending programs. Therefore, it is imperative that the new Inspector General be aggressive and tireless. I expect Mr. Thorson to provide strong and steady leadership at this pivotal juncture on behalf of America's 25 million small businesses and their employees."

###